

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 2/24/2015	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe/781-5025	
(4) SUBJECT Update on current drought conditions confirming the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the update on current drought conditions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT { X } Consent { } Presentation { } Hearing (Time Est. ____) { } Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS { } Resolutions { } Contracts { } Ordinances { X } N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: { } 4/5 Vote Required { } N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY { } N/A Date: 3/11/14, 4/8/14, 5/6/14, 6/3/14, 6/17/14, 7/15/14, 8/12/14, 9/9/14, 10/7/14, 11/4/14, 12/2/14, 12/16/14, 1/6/15, and 2/3/15 http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/Drought_Update/County_Drought_Updates.htm	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW This item was prepared by the Administrative Office			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts.			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe
781-5011

DATE: 2/24/2015

SUBJECT: Update on current drought conditions confirming the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive the update on current drought conditions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

DISCUSSION

Background

On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated.

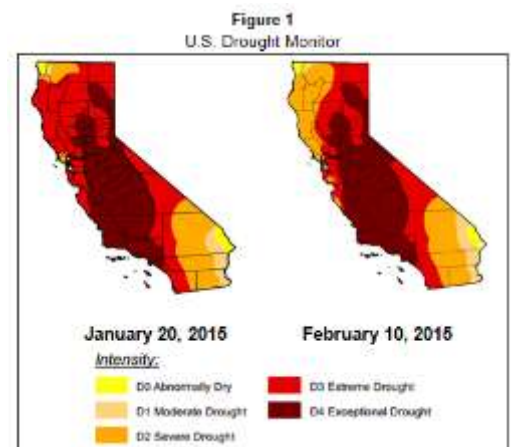
The last 30-day drought update was on February 3, 2015. Due to the Board of Supervisors meeting schedule, staff scheduled this item sooner than necessary in order to meet the 30-day review requirement. Because February's Monthly Drought Update was presented on February 3, this is an abridged update and does not include another Monthly Drought Update attachment. The next 30-day update is scheduled for March 24, 2015.

The Drought Task Force continues to meet regularly to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach. Drought conditions have remained relatively unchanged and there were no major actions requiring further discussion that have occurred since the last update.

Current Conditions

Current local drought conditions confirm the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency. The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released February 12, 2015 indicates San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 1). Approximately 93% of California is at a level D-2 Severe Drought or worse with 40% of the state at a D-4 intensity level. Figure 1 shows how the percentages of intensity levels have changed since the February 3 update.

Countywide rainfall totals for the 2014-15 water year (July 2014 – June 2015) range from 26-44% of average annual rainfall totals. Reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity for this time of year including: Nacimiento 23% (86,515 acre feet); Lopez 40% (19,960 acre feet); Salinas 19% (4,433 acre feet); and Whale Rock 45% (17,428 acre feet) of capacity. See Attachment 2 and 3 for additional information.



Impacts

Agricultural conditions continue to be impacted by lack of moisture. On February 4, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) renewed disaster declarations for all 58 counties in California, making all qualified farm operators in the designated areas eligible for low interest emergency (EM) loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. A total of 55 counties, including San Luis Obispo, were designated as primary natural disaster areas. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part of their actual losses. Additional information is available online at <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov> or by contacting the USDA Farm Service Agency Templeton Office at (805) 434-0398.

Mild winter weather and shorter days have continued to minimize the fire danger overall due to an increase in cool, humid conditions. In January, there were 6 wildfires that burned 0 acres in San Luis Obispo County. Since 2007, the average for January is 10 wildfires burning 53 acres. Locally, CAL FIRE remains at winter preparedness staffing levels

Winter Outlook

California, the central coast in particular, remains the driest region in the western half of the U.S. over the past 3 years. This January finished as one of the driest Januaries on historical record, with very little meaningful precipitation throughout the state. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), northern and central California has received less than 2% of normal rainfall for this time of year. In addition to lack of rain, the annual snowpack assessment measurements taken by the California Department of Water Resources on January 29, 2015, recorded snow levels of only 25% of average for this time of year. Snow makes up almost 60% of California's water resources. All of these indicators and preliminary forecasts for below normal rainfall amounts point to 2015 as year number four of continued severe drought conditions for California. Even with recent storms, much of the state remains in a severe drought which is unlikely to abate much in the long term. The forecast for January 15 through April 30, 2015 from NOAA indicates current drought conditions throughout California, including San Luis Obispo County, will tend to persist or intensify.

Countywide Data Collection

The Drought Task Force continues to utilize a number of survey tools and data sources to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach.

Domestic Wells

The Governor's Drought Task Force created an online intake form for use by local, state, or tribal and federal agencies to document domestic water issues. Data collected is considered confidential and access is restricted. Individuals with domestic water issues are encouraged to contact County Environmental Health at (805) 781-5544.

In addition, the County Drought Task Force created a supplemental anonymous survey. The survey does not ask for any identifying information and is intended to support our request for federal disaster assistance for individuals. Individuals who wish to remain anonymous are encouraged to complete the supplemental survey online at www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/Drought_Update or by phone by calling (805) 781-5011.

Drought Business Impact survey

The San Luis Obispo County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) continues to gather information on local drought-related job impacts. This is part of a statewide survey by the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) as part of an ongoing online survey to inform the Governor's Drought Relief Task Force of the drought's ripple effects. The WIB's Drought Business Impact survey is available at <http://sloworkforce.com/drought-survey/>.

Assistance Programs

The County continues to identify assistance programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions. Information regarding drought assistance for rural homeowners has been placed on the County Drought Conditions and Water Conservation webpage. Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), delivers a number of programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions.

Emergency Actions

The proclamation continues to provide authority for unforeseen needed actions. As also noted, proclamation provides a statement to State and Federal agencies of the seriousness of the County's situation.

The County has taken no new emergency actions specific to the drought in this reporting period.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a County Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: the Administrative Office, Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, General Services, County Parks, County Fire (CAL FIRE), Agricultural Commissioner, Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, Health Agency, and County Counsel. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in regular contact with Cal OES to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with local water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant State agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track drought-related costs.

RESULTS

The Board's review of this staff report fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the County and State.

Note: Any regulations issued because of the local drought emergency would be subject to Board approval. The local emergency proclamation adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - USDA Drought Monitor
2. Attachment 2 - Rainfall and Reservoir Update
3. Attachment 3 - Reservoir Levels
4. Attachment 4 - Seasonal Drought Outlook